



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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District of Arizona*

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## **TUCSON MAN SENTENCED TO OVER 10 YEARS IN PRISON ON STEROID DISTRIBUTION AND OTHER CHARGES**

TUCSON, Ariz. – Aaron Habben, 35, of Tucson, Ariz. (and formerly of Lincoln, Neb.), was sentenced here to 130 months in prison by U.S. District Judge Cindy K. Jorgenson. Habben was found guilty of 73 felony counts by a federal jury on September 29, 2005 of Conspiracy to Distribute Anabolic Steroids, Possession with Intent to Distribute Anabolic Steroids, Fraud and Related Activity in Connection with Identification Document, Bribery of Public Officials, Money Laundering and Conspiracy to Money Launder.

U.S. Attorney Paul K. Charlton said of the sentence, "This is a just resolution to this case. In essence, Habben is no different than any other drug dealer. This sentence also serves to take an identity thief out of our community."

"Steroid abuse is a growing concern to parents, children and sports institutions. Criminals such as Habben are no different than any other drug offender," said DEA Special Agent in Charge Timothy J. Landrum. "For kids who think that using steroids is a short cut to success, the long term effects prove the contrary. Steroids are not performance enhancing drugs, they are performance destroying drugs."

In February 2002, U.S. Customs officials intercepted packages, filled with anabolic steroids shipped from China, that were addressed to personal mail boxes at Pack 'N Ship and Aim Mail Center in Tucson, Ariz. Agents from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) conducted surveillance operations and identified the defendant and his place of residence. During the execution of a search warrant of Habben's house, agents found thousands of pills of anabolic steroids and gallons of liquid anabolic steroids, along with 15 false identification cards (including fake driver's licenses from Nebraska and fake Social Security cards), overseas bank account receipts from prior payments of steroids shipments and three computers that contained the terms of the steroid sales conducted over the internet.

Agents also found \$64,000 in cash hidden in a hollowed out book in Habben's bedroom dresser. When Habben was informed that the money had been found, he offered the agents, who refused, an opportunity to take the money as long as they left him and did not arrest him.

After being placed in custody, Habben continued his sale of steroids by enlisting his mother and an ex-girlfriend in Nebraska to conduct the transactions. From jail and through his mother, Habben began moving the proceeds from his illicit drug sales into stock options and trading houses. Agents secured search warrants in Nebraska and Georgia and seized more steroids and over \$87,000 in cash that the defendant's mother was hiding. In all, five defendants were charged with 78 counts.

The investigation leading to the guilty verdicts was conducted by the Food and Drug Administration, Office of Criminal Investigations, and the Drug Enforcement Administration. U.S. Postal Inspection Services and U.S. Customs and Border Protection were also involved in the investigation. The prosecution was handled by Serra M. Tsethlikai and D. Thomas Ferraro, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBER: CR-02-1248-TUC-CKJ  
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